



LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date:	November 16, 2022
Time:	6:30PM
Location:	City Council Chamber, 375 Merrimack Street, 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01852

Members of the public may view the meeting via LTC and those wishing to speak regarding a specific agenda item shall register to speak in advance of the meeting by sending an email to the Superintendent indicating the agenda item, a phone number and email address so we can provide a zoom link to access the meeting. Email address is mpalazzo@lowell.k12.ma.us. If no access to email you may contact us at 978-674-4324. All requests must be submitted before 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

1. SALUTE TO FLAG

2. ROLL CALL

On a roll call at 6:44 p.m., members present were, namely: Ms. Martin, Ms. Thompson, Mayor Chau, Ms. Chhoun, Ms. Delrossi, Ms. Doherty and Mr. Lay.

Ms. Thompson made a motion to provide the reports to the Committee on Thursday when a holiday falls on a Monday or simplify/lessen the reports presented on Monday; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

3. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

4. MINUTES

4.1. Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Lowell School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, November 2, 2022

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes of the Special and Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meetings that were held on Wednesday, November 2, 2022; seconded by Ms. Delrossi. 7 yeas APPROVED

4.2. Approval of the Minutes of the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, November 2, 2022

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes of the Special and Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meetings that were held on Wednesday, November 2, 2022; seconded by Ms. Delrossi. 7 yeas APPROVED



5. PERMISSION TO ENTER

5.1. Permission to Enter: November 16, 2022

Ms. Doherty made a motion to approve the Permission to Enter: seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

6. MOTIONS

6.1. [By Eileen DelRossi]: Request the superintendent to report on the accountability of Lowell Public Schools with the outsourcing of our bus students on NRT Transportation? What is the protocol for when a bus driver is absent and a substitute bus driver is needed? Where do the substitute bus drivers obtain bus routes from? How substitute drivers assure accuracy of bus routes is with NRT or Lowell public Schools?

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED

6.2. [By Eileen DelRossi]: Request the Superintendent to evaluate and report on the diversity of special education programs (CSA, LEAP, Language Based, DEAF/Blind) throughout the district as to assure equitable and inclusive special education programming to all schools.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 7 yeas APPROVED

7. SUBCOMMITTEES

7.1. Joint Human Resources & Labor Relations and Equity & Access Subcommittee
Report and Approval of the Meeting of Wednesday, October 26, 2022 [Stacey Thompson, Chairperson and Connie Martin, Chairperson]

Ms. Martin and Ms. Thompson, Chairs of the Human Resources & Labor Relations and Equity & Access Subcommittee stated that most of what was discussed at the subcommittee meeting was discussed at the School Committee meeting on November 2, 2022.

Ms. Thompson stated that she wanted to add what Professional Development has to offer with regards to the DEI certification to the HR audit.

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the report as a report of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty 7 yeas APPROVED

8. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

8.1. Update On Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER)

Ms. Turner, Chief Academic Officer gave an update to the Committee on the Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER). Ms. Turner spoke about the following:



- ESSER – Where we started
- What is it?
- What principles were used for allocation?
- What were our strategic priorities?
- ESSER – Where we currently are
- ESSER – Where we are going/navigating the fiscal cliff
- Next Steps

Ms. Turner stated that she is constantly monitoring and reallocating when necessary due to savings or shortages. She stated that she consistently uses fund management to ensure that we are spending first to expire funds and since this is the second year of ESSER, the district is now actively monitoring the spend rate to ensure timely and wise spending of this soon to expire funding source. She stated that she will project and estimate the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) to plan and manage.

The Committee requested moving forward updates be put on legal size paper as well as making the font larger.

Ms. Martin stated in year three (3) the district should be prudent on technology purchases.

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.5 and 8.7 through 8.11 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Doherty made a motion to suspend the rules to take item #8.4 Monthly Incident Report out of order; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

8.2. Update On School Facilities

Dr. Hall, Chief Operating Officer provided a report that stated that the OPM for the modular project has recommended that an architect be retained to assist with the STEM Modulares project to help provide more certainty in regard to what the STEM Academy could expect to receive with a \$5.3-million-dollar investment. The district has been informed that the cost of these architectural services would likely be \$225,000 to \$250,000 and the district was also told that the earliest that the modulares could be installed would be 18-20 months from now given supply chain challenges. The OPM has relayed that costs will be hard to predict due to market fluctuations so the costs are not very predictable and having an architect analyze the project would provide more certainty. Typically, the cost for such modulares is about \$600/sq. ft. for these sort of modulares. The OPM stated that we could always add modulares later if costs had to be adjusted and that all of these estimates are subject to change depending on how the market adjusts and depending upon what is needed based on existing utilities available for connection. The administration is currently reviewing this information and will be providing a recommendation.

Ms. Doherty stated that she is looking for an executive summary from the administration for the Lowell High Project. She then asked for a timeline for the STEM.

Superintendent stated that due to supply chain delays and the cost OPM will analyze this to see if permanent construction should be done in lieu of modulares.



Ms. Doherty asked again what the timeline is and if she should hold a Facilities Subcommittee meeting.

Superintendent Boyd stated that he will be providing a recommendation at the December 7, 2022 meeting, but not a full architectural plan.

Ms. Doherty asked what the HVAC areas of concern are.

Dr. Hall stated that the red column in the report he suspects is because the panels aren't working.

Ms. Doherty asked the Mayor if he could have the DPW provide an HVAC update with areas of concern.

Ms. Thompson asked that Mr. St. Cyr be invited so he would be on hand to answer questions the Committee may have.

Ms. Martin stated that having people here who can answer questions would be very helpful.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to have the Mayor get an HVAC update from the DPW department with their areas on concern and their priorities; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.5 and 8.7 through 8.11 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

8.3. Monthly Enrollment Report

Ms. Phillips, Chief Equity & Engagement Officer provided a report that showed the certified student enrollment count as of October 1st as reported by the Office of Performance Management is 14,255, which is an increase of 167 from SY 2022. As of October 31, 2022, there are 14,401 students enrolled with the Lowell Public Schools. In prior enrollment reports, the School Committee received an update on the students in the Family Resource Center (FRC) category from the district enrollment report. The total number of these students were reported to the School Committee as well as what the students were missing to complete their registration. The primary reason students would be in the FRC category was due to missing the required registration documents.

Ms. Thompson asked about the registration in other gateway cities and what it looked like. She also asked for more information regarding McKinney Vento students (age, etc.).

Superintendent Boyd stated he would get that information for Ms. Thompson.

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.5 and 8.7 through 8.11 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED



8.4. Monthly Incident Report

Ms. Phillips, Chief Equity & Engagement Officer provided a report to the Committee that informed them that during the month of October, 103 incidents were reported using the online reporting system and ninety (90) investigations were completed and uploaded into the database during this timeframe. A synopsis of the investigation findings and administered consequences was included in the presentation. The report stated that as it relates to the typical timeframe from the opening of a discrimination, racism, bullying or intimidation complaint until the time an investigation begins, per our review of the data submitted in the October report is 0.91 school days. The average timeframe for completed investigations is 2.9 school days. The Equity Office met with a team of community members and Lowell Public School staff to review updates to the Racism, Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying forms that were made in conjunction with the Lowell Student Advisory Council and feedback from these updates was positive; however, the team would like to continue identifying strategies to make the process of filing reports of these sensitive matters less daunting and more transparent. Several recommendations were included such as creating a monitoring process, ensuring the reporting form is translated into all high incidence languages, and providing clarity around communicating the process to students and families.

Ms. Thompson asked about the number of unsubstantiated incidents and what is being done to acknowledge and support the people.

Ms. Segarra-Morales spoke for Ms. Phillips who wasn't in attendance and stated that a community center approach was discussed. She also spoke about a survey to discuss the process.

Mr. Thompson stated that she would like a list of what has been done and asked if there has been counseling. She asked about bullying with staff being the aggressor and what work is being done there.

Ms. Segarra-Morales stated that departmental work is being done.

Ms. Thompson stated that the work needs to be consistent. She stated that if restorative justice is being used by a school/department it should be used by everyone. She stated that the bullying numbers are frightening.

Ms. Martin stated that the numbers doubled from September to October and asked what this is representative of.

Ms. Segarra-Morales stated it could be due to an increase in reporting.

Superintendent Boyd stated that the more accustomed people are to using this device, the more comparisons will help the Committee draw conclusions.

Ms. Thompson made a motion to have an Executive Session to discuss what measures are being done to dive deeper into bullying from staff. Ms. Thompson withdrew the motion.

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.5 and 8.7 through 8.11 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED



8.5. YTD Budget Report

Ms. Turner, Chief Financial Officer provided a year to date budget report that was sorted by the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) code to best reflect the sorting found in the budget document approved by the School Committee each year.

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.5 and 8.7 through 8.11 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

8.6. Response to Motion 08. CFO of 10/05/22 by Eileen DelRossi Regarding Mass Safe and Supportive Schools Grant

Ms. Turner, Chief Financial Officer provided a response that informed the Committee that Lowell Public Schools did not apply for the grant because the motion was made on October 5, 2022, but the grant deadline was July 18, 2022 and September 1, 2022 (second part). The report states that the lost opportunity made the district aware that we need an additional step by the Grants Department to forward all Grant Funding Opportunities to the various Chiefs and Program Managers each month to make them aware.

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.5 and 8.7 through 8.11 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

8.7. Response to Motion 18. COO of 10/05/22 by Eileen DelRossi Regarding Special Education Clerks

Dr. Hall, Chief Operating Officer provided a report that informed the Committee that Administrative Assistants for Special Education are primarily Grade 5 Administrative Assistants. The report states that one (1) Administrative Assistant primarily works with the Business Office and is a Grade 6A and there is also a Grade 7 Executive Secretary and a Grade 5 Administrative Assistant at Lowell High School. The report included job descriptions and an MOA which moved a position aligned with the Business Office to a Grade 6A in 2021.

Ms. Delrossi asked what differentiates a Grade 3 from a Grade 7. She stated that positions need to be looked at. She stated that Special Education clerks has a lot of responsibility and she notices some discrepancies.

Superintendent Boyd stated that these are SEIU proposals and that we may want to discuss this when we enter bargaining.

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.5 and 8.7 through 8.11 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED



8.8. Response to Motion 08. COO of 07/13/22 by Connie Martin Regarding Staff Turnover

Dr. Hall, Chief Operating Officer provided a report that provided the staff turnover rate at each school. The report was produced by the Finance Department by comparing teachers and paraprofessionals on the schools' payrolls for June 2022 and October 2022.

Ms. Martin stated that she would like to see a staff turnover report periodically and that it's a good tracking device.

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.5 and 8.7 through 8.11 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

8.9. Response to Motion 25. COO of 11/02/2022 by Eileen DelRossi Regarding LHS Bathrooms

Mr. Underwood, Director of Operations & Maintenance provided a report to the Committee informing them that there are a total of twenty-two (22) student restrooms as originally designed and over the years, two (2) of these restrooms were converted for other purposes. The report states that of the remaining twenty (20), one (1) has been closed due to a water damage floor which has a deteriorated wood floor below the tile creating an unsafe condition and the other has been closed for security concerns.

Ms. Thomson made a motion to investigate/rectify the bathroom issues; seconded by Ms. Chhoun. 7 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.5 and 8.7 through 8.11 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

8.10. Response to Motion 09. CFO of 11/02/22 by Connie Martin Regarding Overtime Payments

The Response to Motion 09. CFO of 11/02/22 by Connie Martin Regarding Overtime Payments has been tabled until the next meeting.

8.11. Response to Motion 17. COO of 09/21/22 By Eileen DelRossi Regarding Compressor at the McAuliffe School

Dr. Hall, Chief Operating Officer provided a report to the Committee that informed them that two (2) AC compressors have been replaced via the City of Lowell by hiring an outside firm to do the installation; however, some diagnostic work still need to be completed before it is fully operational and it is expected to be completed very soon. The second AC compressor has been diagnosed as unrepairable and a plan is being put together for the funding, purchase and installation. No timeline is available at this time

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 8.1 through 8.5 and 8.7 through 8.11 as reports of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED



9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1. Budget Transfer

Superintendent Boyd noted that a transfer from the School Committee Suspense Account in the amount of \$70,000 is for a newly created ERP Application Specialist (City) that will work in conjunction with both the School Department and the City. The role will be dedicated to the implementation of School Projects in MUNIS.

Ms. Thompson made a motion to approve the budget transfer of \$72,500; seconded by Ms. Chhoun. 7 yeas

9.2. Final Review & Approval of the SY2022-2023 Strategic Goals, Actions and Deliverables

Superintendent Boyd provided his FY2022-023 Strategic Goals, Actions and Deliverables to the Committee in a PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Thompson asked where the action was. She stated that Homelessness programs that are being adopted in the city should be worked in. She also asked about financial wellness as part of the curriculum.

Ms. Martin stated that she is looking forward to meeting with Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC). She stated that his goal Differentiated Autonomy and Support that reads "Implement phase 1 of the district's centralized service delivery and support model for schools that was conceptualized in SY2021/2022, building on the successful implementation of the Renaissance Network to further define operational and programmatic autonomies and systemic support based on school improvement needs" is very hard to judge and provide an approval or failure for.

Ms. Doherty stated that it doesn't talk about absenteeism and just daily attendance and she is looking for evidence – goal and evidence and would like to see a cleaner process.

Ms. Martin made a motion to table the Final Review & Approval of the SY2022-2023 Strategic Goals, Actions and Deliverables until the next School Committee meeting on December 7, 2022; seconded by Ms. Thomson. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.3. Approval of a Doctoral Research Proposal for Ashley Reis Dupere

Mr. Skinner, Chief School Officer informed the Committee that Ashley Reis Dupere is enrolled in a doctoral program at American International College and that a requirement of the program is to complete a dissertation-in-practice research case study. Ms. Dupere's objective of her research, to examine the various pedagogies that elementary teachers use to teach mathematics to English learners (ELs) and the ways in which language and culture influence their approaches to mathematics instruction for ELs. More specifically, this study will explore any potential supports, adaptations, or modifications



that teachers might utilize for ELs, when having to implement mathematics tasks that come from standardized mathematics curriculum or standardized instructional resources. The goal is to evaluate whether these decisions are made in consideration of any complex language that may act as a barrier to mathematics and/or cultural contexts that cause ELs to struggle with sense-making and problem solving. Ms. Dupere proposes to conduct semi-structured interviews with twelve (12) elementary teachers who teach mathematics, with at least one EL student on their caseload. The semi-structured interview will comprise of eighteen (18) open-ended interview questions. Each interview will be audio-recorded and labeled with a pseudonym to protect the identity of the participant. Each interview is expected to last approximately sixty (60) minutes.

Ms. Martin made a motion to approve the Doctoral Research Proposal for Ashley Reis Dupere; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.4. Vote to Accept a Donation of \$2,377 from the Greater Lowell Community Foundation

Ms. Turner, Chief Financial Officer informed the Committee that the Greater Lowell Community Foundation wishes to donate the proceeds raised during the Lowell Kinetic Sculpture Race to the Rogers STEM Academy in the amount of \$2, 377.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to accept the donation of \$2,377 from the Greater Lowell Community Foundation; seconded by Ms. Delrossi. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.5. Vote to Accept Donation off \$5,000 From Home Depot

Ms. Turner, Chief Financial Officer informed the Committee that the Home Depot wishes to donate \$5,000 to the Shaughnessy School 's Student Activities fund.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to accept the donation of \$5,000 from the Home Depot; seconded by Ms. Chhoun. 7 yeas APPROVED

10. CONVENTION/CONFERENCE REQUESTS

10.1. International and Overnight Travel Request: LHS Students & Chaperones to Travel to Hawaii

This was withdrawn.

10.2. International and Overnight Travel Request: LHS Students & Chaperones to Travel to Athens and the Islands

This was withdrawn.



11. COMMUNICATIONS

11.1. Communication from the LPS Transportation Department Regarding Student Drop Off Protocol

Mr. Descoteaux, Transportation Director informed the Committee that the transportation department has implemented an additional channel of communication with the bus companies and an added layer of information for parents on the transportation website page. This information will also be disseminated to all schools.

Ms. Doherty asked to please make sure it appears on each school's website page.

Superintendent Boyd stated that he has confidence that it will be.

Ms. Chhoun asked if this assistance will be in available for parents in other languages.

Dr. Hall stated that he will have to check with the bus companies.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to adjourn at 8:32 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Chhoun. 7 yeas APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,

**Joel D. Boyd, Ed.D., Superintendent and
Secretary to the Lowell School Committee**

JDB/mes